

Legends & Lore

1885

of

PARKE COUNTY
INDIANA

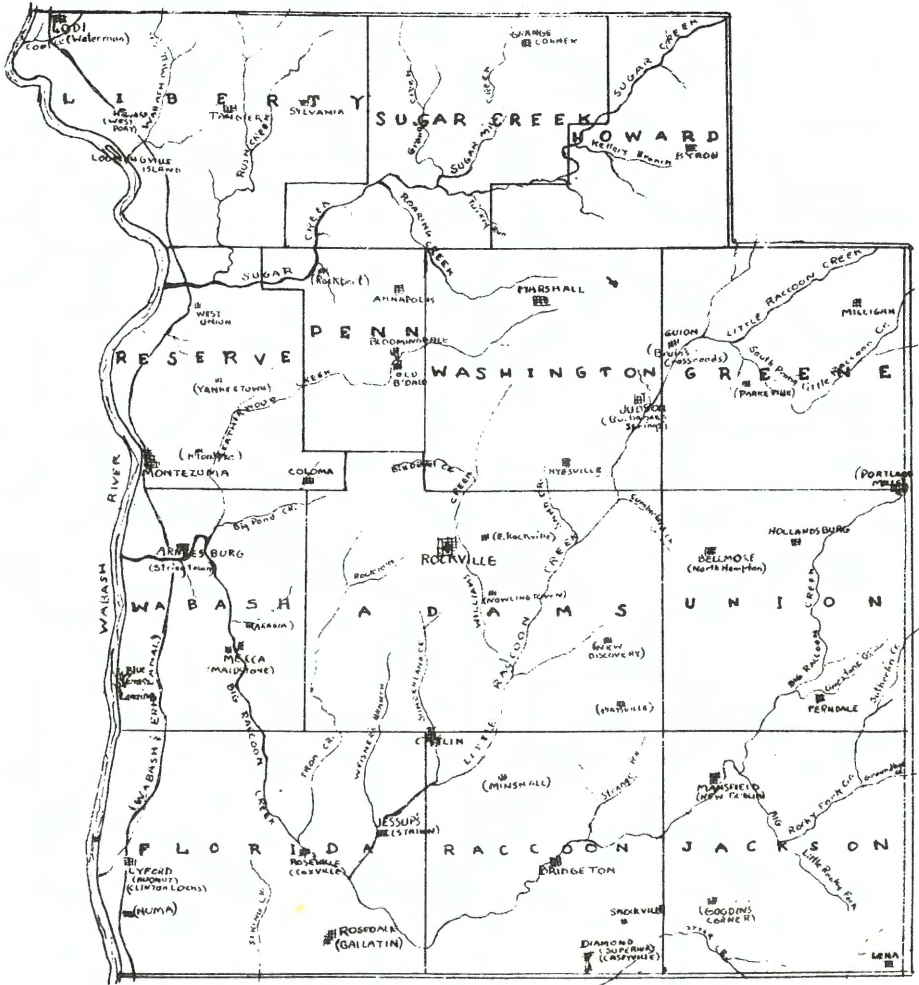


Legends & Lore

OF
PARKE COUNTY
INDIANA



by
Juliet Snowden



PARKE COUNTY

STREAMS AND TOWNS

AREA --- 440 SQ. MI.

Contents

Introduction	
A Romance, With a Beginning and An End	1
Strong Drink, Gambling and Lesser Vices	3
On Going to Cities	13
Medical Marvels and Marked Babes	15
Snakes, Anyone?	19
Home Cooking, Country Style	22
Spooks and Specters	24
Hermits and Recluses	29
Bloody Parke	31
Our Streams, and Who Named Them	36
All Our Towns	41
It's a Mad, Mad, Mad County Seat	48

Introduction

Our fraction of the Universe — Parke County, Indiana — is not like any other fraction. There are loftier hills and wider prairies and denser forests in many places. There are places where wealth and poverty are more apparent and where violence in both man and nature is commoner than in Parke county.

Wherever you go or whomever you meet, there is a potential drama if the playwright had time and skill to recognize it. His production might involve one incident that passed unremarked, or it might include events thru the years. It has often been said the makings of a good book lie in the life of any of us. What, then, could be done with the life of an entire community?

This little book does not answer that question, but may ask it again and again. Our legends are not always, by definition, actual legends because most of the stories are known to be true. They are legendary in that they have not been shared before with a wide audience. Our lore will not cause any revision in the annals of Americana.

What you will find is only a sort of family scrapbook. It is a Parke county family scrapbook and tells some of our pride, our shame and our fun. It deals with localities, episodes and people. All are part of what makes us what we are.

Introduction To The Second Edition

Writings about the past do not require changes for later editions unless some grave inaccuracy has been included the first time. The only error called to my attention was the death mentioned on page 29. The poor chap didn't "die in bed" but was struck by a train. I am obliged to Lois Sellers for this information.

Juliet Snowden

Rockville, Indiana
September, 1981

© 1981 Juliet O. Snowden

A Romance, With A Beginning and An End

During the 18th century there was a British nobleman, the Earl of Hathaway, who had but one child, a beautiful daughter named Mary who was the apple of his eye. They lived splendidly on a landed estate, complete with professional guardsmen. The daughter fell in love with the captain of this guard—named Captain Linton. Her father displayed typical story-book outrage when his lovely daughter confessed her feelings and Linton was promptly dismissed and warned never to see the girl again.

There followed a period of repining but eventually the young lady seemed to come to her senses and the anxious peer breathed a sigh of relief. Then, some weeks later, an invitation was received to a great ball to be given in the nearby town — a seaport. It was to be a masquerade and Lady Mary's costume was a Spanish lady's dress and included a beautifully feathered and beaded lace fan.

It is hardly necessary to tell what happened. Aided and abetted by the inevitable personal maid, the young lady (accompanied by the maid) left to be driven to the ball but was driven, instead, to the harbor where Capt. Linton was waiting with a cabin booked on a departing ship. When the ship went out with the tide, they were aboard and were married at sea by the ship's captain.

They sailed to Virginia. The young lady had providently brought along all the jewels to which she was entitled and they represented a small fortune. The couple bought land and established a home in Virginia. They had a child or two. Then, one day, a friend who knew their story, came with the alarming news that her father was so far from reconciled to her marriage, happy tho it was, that he had hired men to follow her to Virginia and not only was her marriage in danger of annulment but Capt. Linton's life might actually be in danger.

They lost no time, but fled at once and determined to go so far that pursuit would be impractical. Into the wilderness that is now Ohio they went. Eventually their sons went farther west, two settling in the Indiana town that bore their name and one, Lawson Linton, pushed even farther and built a little home on the hillside east of Montezuma, facing the wide valley of the Wabash. Thru marriage, the house went to the Warner family and all that is now left of it is the stone foundation that was the ground floor of the house.

The only reminder of the elopment which Mrs. Linton had kept was the fan she had carried as part of her costume on that eventful night. It was handed down as a memento and eventually was entrusted to Will Shirk, then of Liberty township, who was the great-great-great

grandson of Capt. and Mrs. Linton.

Mr. Shirk not only regarded the fan as a treasure, but engaged in research on the entire sequence of events, both in this country and in England. He discovered that the old earl had relented before his death and had advertised for "Lady Mary Hathaway-Linton or her heirs" to return and be forgiven. Whether she never learned of her father's change of heart or whether she preferred to ignore her claim, Mr. Shirk had no way of knowing, but Lawson Linton had learned of the advertisement, years after it appeared, and had instituted inquiries. The vast estate had long since gone thru chancery and reverted to the crown.

And what became of the fan? Will Shirk never married. However, he had a niece with children and they were lineal descendants so it seemed logical to entrust the fan to this niece. He told her the story and suggested the fan could be displayed in a velvet lined coffee table or box-framed as a wall decoration. She agreed to the suggestion and took the fan which Mr. Shirk had carefully preserved. It was, by then, about 165 years old.

Some time later—not too long before his death—Will Shirk visited in the home of his niece. He looked at her nicely appointed living room and asked, "Where is the fan?"

"The fan? Oh, yes," the niece replied. "You know, it was terribly old and the children played with it and it just went to pieces. So I threw it away."



Strong Drink, Gambling and Lesser Vices

It is well known that most early settlers did their share of drinking. The rigors of winter and the agues of summer may not have been lessened by alcohol, but it seemed to help. It was also the only thing available.

Whisky was distilled at several places in the county shortly after 1820. It was wholesaled at .25c a gallon so, altho money was scarce, the price of a drink was not prohibitive. Many farmers had their own "kitchen stills", and produced what was needed for medicinal or social purposes.

Whatever the reason, heavy drinking was commoner in the past than it is today. As villages sprang up, most of them had several saloons. Fights were the order of the day. It has been suggested that those fights were a healthy release for pent-up antagonisms, but that seems extreme. It is a fact, however, that fighting became so common during the 1820s that it became the accepted practice for all controversies to be saved up till Election Day which became an unofficial Fight Day, as well. This probably seemed a practical arrangement. It gave the disputants time to reconsider their differences. On Election Day every man had to go to the polls anyway, so he might as well kill two birds with one stone. Anyone who failed to show up in his precinct was branded a coward.

Politics alone could — and did — cause violent altercations. If a man had to fight for his candidate, then fight someone who had insulted him 3 or 4 months earlier and then fight a neighbor for infringing on his water rights he had a busy schedule. He might also find himself taking sides in someone else's fight.

Every voting place in the county was filled with fights and brawls so the idea went by the boards and officialdom then came up with the less imaginative policy of forbidding the sale of liquor on Election Day. Whether or not fighting on Election Day was in general vogue or peculiar to Parke county, this writer has not learned but such abuses of alcohol led to the many temperance movements that swept the nation.

Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes

Along in the late 1860s or early '70s it happened that the sheriff kept a goat noted for his adventurous and belligerent disposition. Like all homes of those days, the sheriff's residence in Rockville had a stable and paddock but must have had a weak gate. The goat frequently escaped and invaded the public square.

One sunny autumn morning a little group of ladies were piously making their way to a saloon where they planned to hold a prayer meeting in the name of Temperance. A shout was heard that the goat was loose and they saw him, snorting and charging their way with

his head lowered 'on the ready'. They fled in a body into the nearest store, which was Bates' Drug Store. Their headlong flight took them straight thru the store and back to the prescription department where they literally ran into all their husbands, gathered for a mid-morning nip of Mr. Bates' prescription whisky. They had sought this retreat instead of their usual visit to the saloon in order to avoid an encounter with their wives. The ladies did not publicly exhort that day.

About ten years after the goat episode, another small group of Rockville ladies decided to contribute to the cause of Temperance by opposing the licensing of a saloon operated by a cheerful Irishman. They were women of consequence in the town and, as it happened, all three were daughters of men who had been successful merchants in the town's earliest days. The licensee realized he had serious opposition so he hired the town's outstanding lawyer, Duncan Puett, to defend him and asked for the case to be heard before a jury. In presenting his client's case, the gallant and suave Mr. Puett paid deferential respect to the ladies, whom he had known all his life for he, too, was a son of an early settler.

"These charming ladies," he told the court, "Are of our town's aristocracy and their fathers were active in forming our community. Those splendid men were merchants and sold merchandise typical of those times. When we were all younger, I have often seen these ladies in fine dresses of imported silks and satins. Their fathers could afford the best for them and as they gracefully moved about in those beautiful clothes their silken skirts would rustle and whisper and seemed to be saying, 'Whiskee . . . whiskee . . . WE were bought with whisky.' Because the fathers of these ladies made their fortunes selling whisky in their stores."

Mr. Puett seldom lost a case and he did not lose that one.

From the foregoing, it will be seen that the ladies of Rockville were not remiss in their efforts against the "Demon Rum" and, while the above incidents were not marked by success, many others were. Rockville had no violent activities, such as are associated with Carrie Nation, but another town in the county had just such a scene; two of them, really.

Mansfield had a saloon in the 1860s operated by Sark Barton. It did far too much business to please the ladies of the town and one day they formed a solid phalanx, entered the place, rolled barrels of liquor into the street and smashed them. History does not tell us how Mr. Barton reacted but he evidently knew when he was beaten and left Mansfield. Shortly afterward, Dr. J. Hamilton opened a saloon in the same location — a building right on the bank of Big Raccoon.

It was April 25, 1866. Hamilton had moved in one load of liquor and equipment and gone for another load. At high noon the ladies again gathered. A teamster, J. Hanna, was eating his lunch and resting his oxen nearby. He watched, probably with some amusement, while the ladies conceived the brilliant strategy of hitching the oxen to the

corner of the building which jutted out over the creek. The ladies had a good idea but they didn't understand oxen. The placid beasts refused to budge. The ladies left. J. Hanna finished his lunch and the oxen finished their lunch. When Hanna went back to work he failed to unhitch the building, an oversight he stoutly maintained was accidental, so when he started his team the saloon was toppled into the creek and the ladies had scored another triumph.

Dr. Hamilton, too, knew when he was defeated. When he returned with his second load of supplies and found the building in the creek, he cut his losses and moved out of the county. As of this year—1967—Mansfield has had a covered bridge for 100 years but it has been 101 years since it has had a saloon.

During the many temperance drives, as well as during the nation's brief fiasco of prohibition, all doctors were plagued by patients who thought they needed to be given a prescription for "stimulants". Some doctors found it difficult to write their own prescriptions. Dr. Price, of Liberty township, failed to convince his wife that an occasional toddy would do him good and one evening she was surprised to find him sitting among their bee hives. When she asked him why he had chosen such an odd place for relaxation he coldly informed her he was waiting to be stung so he could enjoy a restorative without troubling her conscience.

Dealer's Choice

Gambling has never constituted as great a problem as has alcohol. While the confirmed gambler is said to be under a more serious compulsion than the habitual drunkard, there have never been national crusades, with local ramifications, as with temperance. Never locally except once, that is. The men of Rockville handled that problem and their technique was entirely different from the ladies'.

Sometime during the 1880s a man gravitated to Rockville and established residence in upstairs rooms on the east side of the square. That he was a gambler is known. A newspaper reference to this man's sojourn described him and his dwelling with the sinister words, "total depravity". To be totally depraved is uncommonly bad; not to know what direction his villainy took is maddening but "total" seems to indicate corruption far beyond marked cards or loaded dice. (Newspapers of those days did not pull their punches. Scandals of all sorts were written with a wealth of factual details that make modern journalism pale and insipid, so when a subject was tactfully skirted you may be sure it really was not fit to print.)

The news story telling of the man indicated his evil but not how it was handled, altho the story was simple. It so happened that on a summer night during a dark of the moon, most of the businessmen of Rockville, by strange coincidence, were strolling thru the schoolyard and found themselves in a group under a certain large tree. Promptly at 10 o'clock a voice spoke in the darkness, pretty much as follows:

"Since we find ourselves here together, gentlemen, I suggest we hold

a brief business meeting. One of us is wearing a dark blue necktie. I move we appoint him chairman of the meeting."

This motion was seconded and unanimously adopted. Then a second voice took charge.

"Gentlemen, it has come to our attention that the town is harboring an undesirable character. It has been suggested that the condition be rectified. Does this suggestion meet with the approval of those present?" There was a unanimous "Aye" and the voice continued, "Is it the will of this group that a committee be appointed to call on such an undesirable individual and offer an alternative to his leaving town?"

Again there was unanimous consent. "By virtue of the authority thus invested in me, I hereby appoint the man wearing a fawn-colored suit and the man wearing a ruby stickpin and the man wearing gold initialed cufflinks to call on such undesirable individual within the next 30 minutes and recommend that he be gone from town before sunrise. If there is no further discussion, I will ask for a motion for adjournment."

The culprit left before 5 o'clock next morning. What was the alternative offered him? Perhaps those at the meeting did not know. There had been a tar and feathering on a previous occasion. There had been cases of severe whippings. Whatever it was, the committee of three couched their proposition in terms that made sudden departure a prudent decision.

Four of a Kind

In 1824 little Oliver Perry Brown, aged one year, was brought to his father's new home in Reserve township. The boy was a hard working youngster and during his 78 years he never lost his admiration of money. He became the largest landowner in Parke county and also the wealthiest. There have been many other wealthy men and women in the county and, almost without exception, they have been kindly, generous and public-spirited but Perry Brown and his wives (he was twice married) practiced economy to a degree that was not compatible with graciousness. As the largest taxpayer in the county Mr. Brown was in a position to raise his voice on matters of public interest and many improvements were delayed or hampered by his opposition.

When a sister of Mr. Brown's was left a penniless widow with an incurable and horrible disease — a glandular disturbance which rendered her elephantine in size and totally helpless — he built a shanty on his premises for her to occupy and applied to the county for the pauper dole, this being before the day of the Poor Farm. Since it was a matter of public record, one of the county papers saw fit to mention it, none too kindly. Mr. Brown replied with an austere statement that he was as much entitled to collect that dole as anyone — if not moreso. It was true, but public opinion was united in the belief that his sister was also entitled to more dignified — if not hu-

mane — treatment. This attitude was heightened by the circumstance that Perry had been entrusted by his father's will to divide the considerable estate among the children and had hoodwinked them into signing legal papers which proved to be agreements to accept \$100 as their share of the estate.

So Mr. O. P. Brown prospered in worldly pelf, if not in those intangibles associated with friendships or spiritual grace.

One day, along in the late 1880s, a young man drove to the Browns' farm in a rig hired at Montezuma. He had a letter of introduction from an executive of the Hudnut Company of Terre Haute, one of the largest canning factories in the world. He was a member of the Hudnut family and had decided to invest an inheritance in a farm in Parke county. Because of his youth and inexperience he wanted good advice before deciding what land to buy and asked Mr. Brown if he would drive with him to some of the places for sale. Mr. Brown was flattered to have been selected to assist young Hudnut, who was staying at the hotel in Montezuma. They arranged for Mr. Brown to drive by next day and pick him up.

Mr. Brown and Mr. Hudnut spent two or three days together, driving to various farms and evaluating them. The older man found the younger one an eager student, quick to see the merits and flaws of the farms they inspected. It was probably the pleasantest period of Mr. Brown's life. The polished manners and good taste of this young man, just out of a fine eastern college, made him a delightful companion. Young Hudnut insisted on providing the al fresco lunches they enjoyed during their drives and each day had the hotel fill a box with choice food.

They decided on a property between Montezuma and Rockville, not too far east of the stretch of road known as Wildmans' Hollow. On the third or fourth day of their trips, they headed toward that farm to make a final inspection and close the deal. There was a watering trough beside the road in Wildmans' Hollow (the remains of it may still be there) and as they entered the hollow they saw a buggy at the trough. A man was standing beside his horse and called to them to stop as they approached. It was immediately evident that he was drunk as a lord, in high good spirits and, of all things, demanding that they hitch their horse and play cards with him. When they demurred, he held their horse and started pulling money from his pockets as evidence of his good faith. To their amazement this was not chicken feed but handfuls of bills of large denominations. With maudlin sincerity he explained he had won most of it the night before in Rockville and was determined to continue playing but no one in Rockville would meet his stakes . . . and if they wouldn't play he would go on to Montezuma and find a game. Mr. Brown and Mr. Hudnut gaped at him in consternation, then young Hudnut, being a little more sophisti-



He was drunk as a lord.

cated than Mr. Brown, asked whose cards they would play with and was told they could play with anybody's cards they wanted to as long as they had enough money to play for his sort of stakes.

Mr. Brown turned to Mr. Hudnut in perplexity. "This fellow looks decent enough, but he's drunk. Does he really mean what he says?" he whispered.

"I think he does — because he's drunk. You know what is going to happen, Mr. Brown. Somebody is going to play poker with that fool and win his money. It may not be very nice but if I had more than forty or fifty dollars on me I'd be inclined to accept his invitation."

"Do you know how to play poker?"

"Well, now, Mr. Brown, I played a lot of poker in college — not for that kind of money, of course. But I never lost much."

"Ask him what sort of stakes he has in mind."

After some palaver, the intoxicated one stated flatly he would not get in any game with limits less than \$5 and he wanted to see his own \$5,000 matched before he would so much as cut the deck. He would play right there by the roadside in broad daylight and he wouldn't take anybody's check not even if they were the president of the United States.

At about this point in the confab another buggy drew up, pulled by a spirited horse and driven by a well-dressed man who was promptly invited by the drunk to alight and play cards. The newcomer was mightily amused and, of course, declined but became interested in the situation. He saw that Brown and Hudnut were tempted to accept the challenge and made this suggestion: He was a lawyer from Danville, Illinois; he had spent the preceding morning at Greencastle on legal matters and had a call to make in Eugene the following day. Since he was in no hurry, he volunteered to stay and referee the game for fun and, if the winner felt inclined, for a good dinner. He introduced himself by means of business cards and Mr. Brown and Mr. Hudnut agreed that the presence of a disinterested spectator made the adventure a lot more reassuring.

Mr. Brown again conferred with Mr. Hudnut. "If I was to go into Rockville and get enough cash, do you think he would remain in this — in this frame of mind till I got back? And would you do the playing?"

Hudnut pondered. "How long would it take?" Upon being told it might take the better part of an hour, at most, Hudnut thought it very likely their man would still be "in the frame of mind" to want to play.

"I'll make a suggestion, Mr. Brown. You go to Rockville and get the money. I'll stay here and make sure he doesn't drink too much; he probably has a bottle in his buggy. If you want me to play against him, I'll do it for a quarter of the winnings. I can't put up my share of the money now, but I'll give you a personal check, along with what cash I have. That's in case we lose only I don't think we are going to

lose a cent. But Mr. Brown, just to be on the safe side, buy a deck of cards."

So, Mr. O.P. Brown whipped up his horse and sped to the bank where he withdrew \$5,000, stopped to buy a deck of cards and back to Wildmans' Hollow he flew, probably setting a new record for that trip. He found the affable drunk and Mr. Hudnut resting on a horse blanket under a shady tree with the lunch box opened. Mr. Hudnut whispered to Mr. Brown he thought it advisable to give their bibulous friend a little food because he had had more to drink while they waited. The lawyer was going over some of his papers but admitted that the unexpected holiday was a welcome chance for relaxation and he was not really inclined to do anything but enjoy himself as a spectator.

Then began one of the most remarkable poker games ever played in Parke county. In that pastoral setting, with birds calling and sunlight glinting thru the trees, the cards were shuffled and dealt and the gold-backs and greenbacks changed hands as casually as if they had been leaves from the trees. Mr. Hudnut played a cool and controlled game, seldom bluffing and losing courteously when he was bettered. The stranger, too, played like a gentleman but was observed to have more frequent recourse to his bottle when the cards fell against him. At first the luck seemed equal, then things took a turn for the worse for the stranger. He drank more deeply and began to raise on hands that were pitifully poor. Then the game was over. Hudnut had won the stranger's last bill. He implored them to allow him to go into Rockville and raise more cash to continue the game but the afternoon was about over and when they got to their feet it was apparent the stranger was not going to stay awake much longer. He was entirely good natured about the game and went reeling to his buggy with friendly farewells, having decided to return to Rockville for a night's sleep.

The winnings were put into the lunch box and stowed in Mr. Brown's buggy. It was too late to pursue the farm purchase that day and Mr. Hudnut invited the lawyer to dine with him at the hotel in Montezuma. The lawyer accepted the invitation and decided to spend that night there and go on to Eugene early next morning.

Mr. Brown and Mr. Hudnut followed the lawyer to Montezuma, discussing the incredible experience they had had all the way. When they reached the hotel, Hudnut asked Brown to take charge of the winnings for that night; they could divide the spoils next day, after deducting the cost of the dinner, before starting again to buy the farm.

Mr. O.P. Brown drove home and probably marveled at the strange fate that had made him, at his time of life, a participant in a high-stakes game of chance. Did he suffer any qualms or consider any unfair advantage had been taken? Probably not. He never mentioned it, if he did. But he DID mention it, vociferously, when he got home and opened the lunch box and found it full of newspaper.

By the time the sheriff could be notified, the drunken stranger had mysteriously vanished. By the time Mr. Brown got to the hotel in

Montezuma, young "Hudnut" had left without lingering. No one from Hudnut & Co. had written a letter of introduction and there was no young man of the family looking for a farm.

The lawyer, too, had an assumed identity but unquestionably he and "Hudnut" had lost no time in driving west behind that spirited horse.

It was a 9-day wonder in Parke county, Mr. Brown insisting that anyone would have been deceived, as he had been, by that plausible young man who turned out to be such a rotten young man. No one ever mentioned to the sanctimonious Mr. Brown that confidence men who are out for big stakes always know what they are doing and, in cases of that kind, the victims, too, know what they are trying to do.

At some time during the next year, Mr. Brown engaged a detective — a war veteran with a wooden leg — who claimed to have certain knowledge of the whereabouts of at least one of the guilty trio. So Perry Brown invested another \$1,000 in what turned out to be merely another confidence scheme. The detective was eventually found to be a man known far and wide as 'Pegleg' Norris. He did, indeed, know the whereabouts of one of the confidence men, named James Greene, and they both disappeared in Pennsylvania. The other two were ultimately discovered to be named O'Brien and Waddell. They had a falling out and O'Brien killed Waddell in Paris but was never captured. Mr. O.P. Brown never recovered a cent of his \$6,000.

It has been said that no sound is ever lost, but its waves continue forever. If that were true and we could somehow "tune in" all conversations, wouldn't it be fun to hear what those three scamps said while Mr. Brown was on his trip to Rockville?

Dead Heat

Horse racing, both harness and running, was an exciting part of life during the 19th century. The popular Bridgeton Fair, begun in the 1860s, had a track; so had the Rockville Fair, which came later. Unofficial racing went on all the time and most races involved wagers.

Sometimes racing had strange and unpleasant complications as, for example, one that took place at Mansfield about 100 years ago.

A few young fellows were loitering near the mill one afternoon when a stranger rode up. He was their own age, on a nice looking horse and, as so often happened, the talk turned to speed. The stranger was proud of his horse and offered a substantial wager that his horse could come in ahead of any horse there. Two or three of the local boys promptly accepted the challenge and they all withdrew to a certain stretch of road well-suited to racing. The contestants lined up and the race began.

Halfway along the course, when they were running about even, the stranger fell from his horse in a peculiar way, but the horse kept on running to the finish line. They found the stranger dead; his head had struck a rock, killing him instantly. He carried no identification and

was buried in a nearby cemetery in an unmarked grave.

It was discovered by men who worked with his horse that it was trained to finish a race with an empty saddle and the stranger's words, "My horse will come in ahead of any horse here," were remembered. The young man evidently specialized in winning horse races by the trick of "falling" from his horse, having it win thru the advantage of carrying no load and reminding the losers of the exact terms of the wager. On that day, the tricky stranger had chosen a fatally wrong spot to perform his fall.

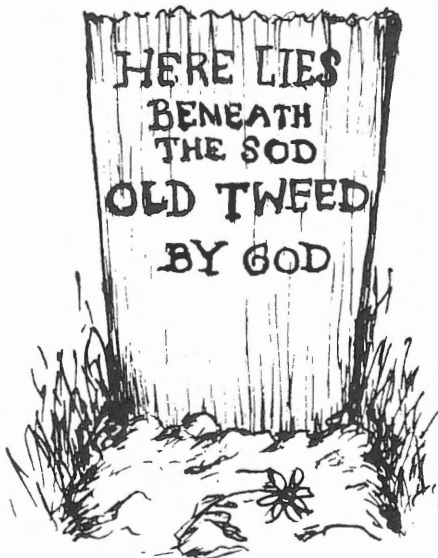
Old Tweed

Nocturnal adjudication, of the kind described in Dealers' Choice, is unwholesome as a rule but, on rare occasions, expedient. For the final relegation of Old Tweed no other course suggested itself.

Old Tweed was not a gambler or drunkard and probably never even attended one of the cock fights that used to be held. Really, Old Tweed has no place in this chapter because it was only a harmless jacket but the story shows that Rockville men have often proved themselves mettlesome — and sometimes meddlesome.

As a young man, D. Stark — as he was always called — was a popular member of his age group. He had been reared in a home where thrift was emphasized and he owned a tweed jacket which he wore during his waking hours over a period of years. He had a job, the Starks were people of means and D.'s habitual garb annoyed his friends who nicknamed the coat Old Tweed.

It was a good jacket and D. saw no reason to part with it but one morning he couldn't find it. He accused his friends of having hidden Old Tweed and at last they admitted they had stolen it during the night and offered to take D. to his coat. They took him to a secluded grove and showed him a little mound of freshly turned earth with a shingle for a marker. On the shingle was printed this:



On Going to Cities

For many years Cincinnati was the metropolis upon which the frontier depended for all sorts of supplies. All shipments of goods to Parke county came by water until after 1825; down the Ohio, up the Wabash and then up Big Raccoon by keel boat. Traveling overland, except by horseback, was next to impossible until some semblance of roads could be hacked thru the wilderness but, even so, ox-drawn wagons made the trip to Cincinnati and back fairly early. Loads of grain and other local products were taken for sale and scarce goods brought back. Under favorable conditions, oxen might be expected to cover 5 or 6 miles a day with loaded wagons. One time a little boy made the round trip and came home with lively reports of the city. Among other things, he said, "Every man wears a beaver hat and common sop is called gray vy." (He meant gravy.)

When Samuel Strauss, an immigrant boy of about 19, was making his way west he stopped in Cincinnati to visit some cousins. One day a group was gathered around admiring a horse just purchased by a young man barely known to his cousin. Sam remarked to his cousin, in German, "He need never worry about the horse going blind. It is blind already." It happened the purchaser understood German and angrily asked Sam what he meant — and also wagered a bottle of wine that the horse was not blind. It was soon demonstrated that the horse was, in fact, blind. Sam's judgment about horses was always good; on one occasion it was too good. It was about 7 years after the blind horse episode — in 1846 — and Sam was in Chicago with 36 horses to sell. By that time he was no novice. It was his 7th trip to Chicago with horses but the market was slow and expenses were high — .20c a day per head. He always stayed with a Mr. Jackson who lived a few miles south of town and on that trip Mr. Jackson offered to trade several acres of land for a part of the drove. Sam declined, not sharing Mr. Jackson's belief in the future of the town. Later he recalled the incident ruefully when the land he might have had became known as Jackson Park.

Another story from about the same time is told about Cyrenus Pruett. He was in Greencastle and joined a crowd watching a man who claimed he would demonstrate how to start a fire without flint and steel or live coals. He made a mound of dry tow, twigs and bark. Then he produced a little stick with a yellow end which he scraped on a rock and, presto! A flame! The fire was started and he told his fascinated audience he had seen the same demonstration in Indianapolis where some Easterner had them for sale. He had bought a small supply and was willing to sell a few at 3 for .25c. This was a lot of money for those days but Cyrenus decided the folks back home in Jackson Township should see this marvel, so he bought 3 of the new-fangled things and carefully wrapped them in his silk neckerchief

and headed for home. He stopped along the way and invited the neighbors to come in that evening. When all were assembled he proceeded as the man in Greencastle had done and the Parke county folks saw their first Lucifer match. Everyone there had had the experience of having the fire go out and running to the nearest neighbor's for a shovelful of live coals — that being easier than the laborious process of striking sparks. Soon they were more common but it was a good many years before Lucifers were casually used. People continued to light candles and lamps with splinters or spills (tightly rolled strips of paper) that they first lighted in the fireplace.

Medical Marvels and Marked Babes

The most cursory reading of early medical practice makes us wonder that anybody survived. Parke county was fortunate in that most of the doctors who came here were comparatively well educated and intelligent. Elsewhere in Indiana, during the days when about all that was required to "hang out a shingle" was the shingle, it is freely admitted that many of the ill who survived did so in spite of the doctors, not because of them. A lot of fun is made of "granny" remedies and "yarb" (herb) medicaments but most of them were effective and were based on natural pharmaceuticals. (It is interesting to note the word itself derives from "witchcraft".) There were countless times when heroic measures by valiant pioneer women were all that stood between their families and disaster. Sometimes the heroism extended to their neighbors' families.

One such case was in the Pleasant Valley neighborhood. It was past the pioneer period, being in 1869 or '70 when an epidemic of "black diphtheria" broke out. This was diphtheria in its most lethal form and children were very susceptible. Many families were affected and those who had been spared were afraid to go to the help of the stricken. Word came that a family named Richey had lost a child during the night and the other children were desperately sick, but so great was the dread of contagion that no one would go, even to attend to the burial of the child. One neighbor, Mrs. Eliza Pruett Loy, who had seven children of her own, heard the news with dismay — then reached a decision. She conferred with her oldest daughter, Susan, who was about fifteen years old, and arranged for Susan to manage the household. Mrs. Loy then went to the Richey's house and took charge. Another child had died and she prepared both little bodies, bathing them carefully and wrapping them. Neighborhood men agreed to make coffins and leave them at the dooryard, then remove them for burial after Mrs. Loy had placed the bodies in them. During the week another little coffin was needed. Each evening she went to a corner of a field and Susan went to another corner of the same field and thru signals Eliza Loy was kept informed of her own family's welfare. When the surviving Richeys were well enough to be left, she went home. Hot water and lye soap and a complete change of apparel were left in an outlying shed by Susan. Mrs. Loy scrubbed herself and her used clothing, then went into the house in fresh garments. Not only was she strong enough to withstand exposure to the illness, she had the moral strength to recognize her responsibility to the less fortunate.

A matter of record, totally unrelated to any branch of medical science, was the possession, by a woman in Liberty township, of a rare and miraculous object — a madstone. As the name suggests, this was a stone with supposed curative quality for victims of bites by rattlesnakes, mad dogs, and certain forms of "fits." An item was sent in

to a local newspaper telling of a young man being bitten by a venomous snake while working in the hayfield. The boy's father left him there and rode posthaste for the woman and her madstone. She returned with him to the field where the boy was lying with his leg swelling ominously and the other workers standing by helplessly. The woman produced the madstone from its little carrying case and passed it over the fang punctures. A change in the appearance of the madstone indicated to the woman that the treatment had been successful and she assured them they had nothing to fear. The swelling subsided and by next day the boy was again at work. The editor of the paper, J.H. Beadle, was sufficiently intrigued by the story to make a trip to see the woman and was allowed to look at the stone which he described as being flat and oval with the appearance of soapstone. The owner said she had inherited it and that its properties were a complete mystery to her, but it would not perform in the hands of everyone. There had to be an affinity between the stone and its handler. Sometime later the question of the madstone arose again and it was learned the woman had died and the madstone had gone to her daughter, a Mrs. Taylor of Terre Haute. Mrs. Taylor had refused several offers to buy the thing and had ultimately moved from Terre Haute to parts unknown.

Common sense dictates that during a nine-month period the average woman is bound to have enough experiences to offer plausible explanation for almost any birthmark her baby might have and that if babies could be thus "marked" most of us would look like crazy quilts. But so appealing is the idea of a mysterious cause for congenital blemishes that the belief persists. Not too many years ago a Parke county woman was heard to deplore her daughter-in-law's going to a cowboy movie during pregnancy because, she said, "She might see something that would mark the baby — branding cattle and that sort of thing." That same woman solemnly described a monstrous child that was born to a family living in Washington township. It was born with incipient horns and immediately after birth had shown supernatural strength; had, in fact, crawled out of its cradle and crept around the room moaning strangely and trying to escape. It grew to abnormal size within a few hours, then died in a frightful convulsion. IT WAS AN INCARNATION OF THE DEVIL! Forces of Good had wrestled with it and conquered it by killing it. This story, with variations, has recurred thruout mankind's history but, so far as is known, Parke county had only the one visitation. There was no suggestion that the parents of the possessed infant had been in any way to blame.

To return to birthmarks: There was one case in Parke county that was difficult to accept casually. Judge and Mrs. Samuel Maxwell were expecting a child and Mrs. Maxwell's sister-in-law, Mrs. Tilghman Howard, had called one morning to inquire about her condition. They were enjoying a cup of coffee in the kitchen when someone came in



the back door and inadvertently admitted the dog — a great, clumsy, affectionate beast that bounded upon Mrs. Maxwell, licking her face fondly. It leaped with such force that her chair was tipped over. The fall was so severe that she went into labor and very soon delivered twins — a girl and a boy. The boy bore a birthmark upward across one cheek and eye. It was just such a mark as a dog's tongue would leave and was on the right cheek — exactly as the dog had licked Mrs. Maxwell's face. No one in that family, and it was a family of exceptional intelligence and superior education, ever really doubted that Billy Maxwell had been "marked". Parke county has had three Judge Maxwells. The most recent was Howard. Howard's father was Judge David, brother of Judge Samuel. They were sons of Dr. David Maxwell, one of the founders of Indiana University where Maxwell Hall still commemorates the name.

At about the same time (during the 1860s) that Billy Maxwell was born, a family of no education had a baby girl. As the child developed she sprouted coarse hair on her back. This was sometimes displayed to intimate acquaintances and the girl explained it simply. "I got birthmarked," she would say, "Because while Maw was carrying me, Grampaw got et by hogs." Medical science knows such things are impossible and no one really believes in them. But some things are almost easier to believe than to doubt.

It would be unfair to the memory of a remarkable man not to include mention of the late Dr. Wallace W. Wheat of Roseville (Coxville). A typical "legend in his own time," Dr. Wheat attracted an enormous practice. He was a dispensing doctor, as were most doctors until recent times, but if his medicines had superior powers (as was generally believed) it was because he raised and gathered the herbs and simples he used, doing his own decocting and concocting. His office was a jumble of jugs, bottles, phials and beakers, located near the west portal of the Roseville covered bridge. A bachelor, he occupied quarters adjoining the office. Patients flocked to him from near and far, finding lodging in the neighborhood if their condition required frequent treatment. On busy days, the office yard and street might be filled with people waiting to see him and a boy would pass out numbers to regulate admission. The numbers cost a dime and thus his standard charge became, "A dollar and a dime." During the depression of the 1930s Old Doc, as he was usually called, built an addition to his quarters — not because he especially needed the space but to provide employment for local workmen.

Many people thought Dr. Wheat was a man of talent who practiced medicine by instinct rather than training and he did not discourage the idea. He had, however, attended medical college in Cincinnati where he finished the 4-year course, then required, in 3 years — valedictorian of his class. During the St. Louis Exposition of 1903, Dr. Wheat was invited to present a paper before a medical conclave.

Snakes, Anyone?

Parke county has no more snakes than any other rural area, altho when Indiana was settled they were far too plentiful. The story of a veritable 'snake pit' being destroyed near the site of the present courthouse is well substantiated. Those snakes were rattlers.

Less than 50 years ago, Bill Ott, then a lad in his teens, had spent a summer day fishing along Big Raccoon. About sunset he gathered his equipment and was heading for home along the creek bank when he was surprised by a snake dropping directly on his path before him. He stopped to watch it and the next moment he was in a shower of snakes, all dropping from the trees and slithering into the creek. Fortunately, Bill is not dismayed by snakes altho he admitted to being startled. It was impossible to count them but he estimated 15 or 20 fell and took to the water. No one has ever reported a similar experience hereabouts, but the assumption was that they had been sunning themselves in the branches of the trees. A few older fishermen, known for their lack of temperance, said if they ever had had such an experience they wouldn't have told it because nobody would have believed the snakes were real.

Only a few years ago, Bill's sister had a less dramatic snake experience. She was prowling in the woods in early spring when she heard a small but sinister sound. She had never heard a rattlesnake, but this dry, vibrating rattle certainly sounded the way she thought a rattler would sound. She stopped and studied the ground carefully, then spied the snake. It was an ordinary black snake, a few feet away. As she watched, it whisked out of sight in the dry leaves that covered the ground. A little inquiry told her that a good many snakes vibrate their tails when alarmed. This one was vibrating in dry leaves and producing a more ominous result than he could possibly have hoped for.

"Along came a pedlar . . ."

Along in the 1870s three bachelor brothers lived in the Sugar creek hills. Their name was Norman and they were always called 'the Norman boys'.

They owned a little traveling show — a sort of medicine show — with a horse-drawn caravan wagon. Each spring they started out and spent the summer on the road, returning to their small house, little more than a shack, for the winter.

The great feature of their show was a big snake, probably a boa constrictor. Whatever it was, it was big and was their pride and joy. Their house boasted one fair-sized room in which they cooked, ate and lived, and one or two bedrooms. The place was heated by a stove in the larger room and behind the stove, in a pile of old garments and blankets, the snake was bedded down to pass the winter in warm semi-consciousness.



The next moment, he was in a shower of snakes.

In those days pedlars — usually Jewish — still roamed the countryside, walking with their packs of gimcracks, cheap jewelry, laces and oddments, on their backs. One winter's day one of this tribe appeared at the Normans' door and in spite of their assurance that there were no "women folks" and that they did not intend to buy anything, he insisted on coming in. Doubtless he was cold.

He sat down and opened up his pack, going into his spiel in spite of the complete lack of response from the Norman boys. He was getting more eloquent moment by moment when he suddenly paused, transfixed, as a movement in the pile of rags behind the stove caught his eye. Before he could continue, a big loop of snake emerged and plopped down on the floor. With a wild yell he clasped the opened pack in his arms, got to the door (which one of the boys thoughtfully opened) and took off down the road at a dead run, lengths of lace and corners of bandanas flying from the half-closed pack.

The story was the Norman boys' conversational piece de resistance as long as they lived.

Home Cooking, Country Style

It is a popular myth that country food is ambrosial and if anything is home-cooked it is, automatically, fit for a king.

What a wonderful world it would be if this were true, but the sober fact is that some country food is terrible and "home-cooked" frequently means only that the stuff is prepared in smaller quantity and that is its only blessing.

On the average, food today is better than it was in "the good old days" when ice was a luxury and women did not have the advantage of skilled advice in publications and as a service in the county. That is, we repeat, on the average. Those inspired women who regarded preparation of good food as, not only a duty but an adventure, deserved the paeans of praise they received. Even tho they may have had all the fine meat, poultry, game, cream, butter and garden truck they needed, they did not have any of the things that make today's kitchen a sort of laboratory. With the passing of time, it is easy to forget that in many homes the butter was rancid, the potatoes watery and all meat was fried mercilessly, or boiled to death.

Like Mother Used To Make

A brave man once remarked that he instinctively shied away from food tagged, "like Mother used to make" because his mother had been a very bad cook; a delightful, talented woman who loved her family but darned near killed them at the table. Her cakes were heavy, her soup beans were raw, her omelets tough and the meat burnt up. During World War II, a Parke county couple living in Indianapolis fasted and hoarded red stamps so they could home home for Thanksgiving, bringing beautiful prime T-bone steaks. These were placed in the hands of the husband's mother and the dear old lady boiled them!

We like to think such atrocities are rare in Parke county. We also have our own notions about how certain dishes are made. For example: Succotash is green beans with corn and anybody who combines lima beans and corn has no right to call the stuff succotash. When we make hash, we do not light the oven. We dice our leftover beef and combine it with diced potatoes and onion and cook it all with what is left of the beef gravy. We usually dip the hash over biscuits when it is served. If any hash is left over (which seldom happens), it may be made into "hash cakes" and the patties browned on a skillet.

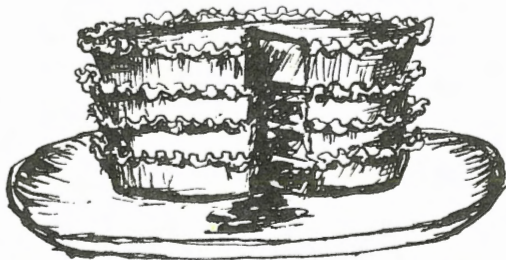
A few Parke county women know how to make Sally Lunn and they don't make it with baking powder, either. They use yeast. The original Sally — she who made Bath, England, famous for its buns — is said to have trampled her dough instead of kneading it. No Parke county woman has ever carried perfection to quite that pitch. In fact, our Sally Lunn dough is beaten and poured into muffins instead of being made into buns and the muffins are so light they almost have to be served from a container with a lid to keep them from floating around the room like little balloons.

Most Parke county women, especially those of the older school, shrug off worry about cholesterol and make their pastry with lard. The lard is kettle rendered and grainy and the resulting pastry is crumbly-rich and delicate. You never confuse the lower crust of one of those pies with the plate it is served on. The filling for the pies may be blue plums or gooseberries, altho traditional favorites are not overlooked. One woman, during a Covered Bridge Festival, made a reputation for her church group with Green Tomato Pie. If this startles you, it might be mentioned that corncob jelly is a specialty now associated with Parke county far and wide.

On the subject of pie, there was once a woman in Parke county who had a method of serving her pie that must have been quite unusual. It was probably a hundred years ago that little Bob Huey went to visit a friend and came home to tell his mother how the friend's mother served pie. The woman had baked four pies, each with a different filling. They were stacked and she then cut down thru all four, so each serving actually consisted of four pieces of pie — like a layer cake. Whether that was a common custom or only that woman's specialty, we do not know.

Green tomato pie is not the only old-fashioned dish that is being turned out in Parke county these days. Humble pawpaws, sometimes known as 'custard apples' or 'Indiana bananas', are finding favor in many forgotten guises. Pawpaw bread and pawpaw ice cream are made by some Parke county women and the things that are cooked or baked with persimmons as a basic ingredient would fill a book.

So country cooking in Parke county is usually good and also interesting, and if your mother wasn't one of those unfortunate women who 'couldn't boil water without burning it,' the chances are you will find most of the women of Parke county able to compete with her when they roll up their sleeves and get out the rolling pin.



Parke County pie, circa 1870.

Spooks and Specters

There was a period during the 19th century when the entire United States was interested in the supernatural. Any student of such phenomena is familiar with many reports of spirit manifestations that occurred. Quite a few were proved deliberate frauds, but a significant number have never been "explained," even by the most dedicated doubters. Present day studies in parapsychology frequently cite some of them. Many more were unreported.

"This Old House"

Parke county had its share, tho only one achieved the distinction of being recorded in any way. In her book, *THE DARK FANTASTIC*, Margaret Echard wrote a novel about a house famous in the county for being haunted. It is a readable book, but Miss Echard did not do the subject justice because she got so involved with her cast of characters — the visible ones — that the spooks had to take a back seat. She leaves the reader in confusion and the inexplicable circumstance she uses to culminate her story sounds like weak fiction. One fears that Miss Echard wavers toward that stuffy segment of mankind that doesn't believe in ghosts.

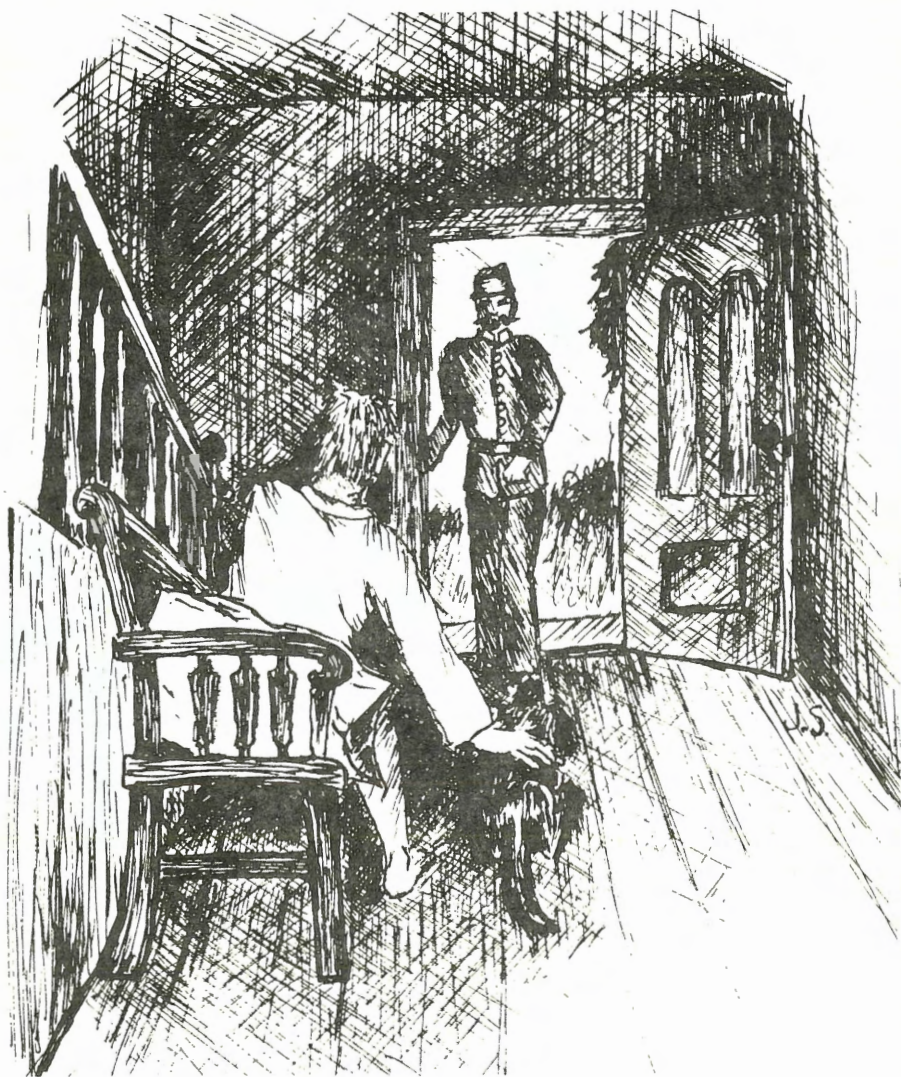
The house was razed a few years ago. It was less than a mile from Bellmore and many older residents remember hearing their grandparents discuss the house. From the very start it was a crotchety house. The builders had troubles. The main chimney took far too long to erect because the bricks were mysteriously tumbled down during the night. Tools capriciously vanished during the day, turning up in unlikely places. These annoyances were not considered as anything but extraordinary aggravations until after the family moved in and began reporting sundry perplexing experiences, all suggestive of a diligent poltergeist. It was several years before the real clincher occurred and this is the event referred to above. The house was surrounded by huge old trees. One morning the family found that during the night wearing apparel from the upstairs bedrooms had been (presumably) swept out thru the open windows and wrapped around trunks and branches of the trees. As news of this episode spread, people came to inspect and to offer explanation. It was before windows were screened, so the obvious suggestion was wind. The night had been still and the garments were in trees on more than one side of the house so that theory could not be swallowed by anyone, even if the garments had not been tightly wrapped around some of the branches. As might be expected, the commonest explanation was "human agency." By that time the family had developed a sort of pride in their ghost and resented the inference — that they had done the stunt merely to attract attention — and most of the neighbors agreed with them. It was coldly pointed out that even if they had possessed a ladder high enough — which no-

body did — some of the things were wrapped around branches too small to support the weight of a prankster unless he had been a small primate. This was borne out by the undeniable fact that some of the clothes could not be retrieved but stayed in the trees for several years until wind and weather wore them out. Yes, the family included some adolescents. It has been often noted that poltergeists most frequently perform where young people are. While this would seem, on superficial reflection, to imply that the youngsters are guilty of the pranks it has been proved on countless occasions that the young people are not guilty and are often unaware of the events being studied.

Til's Furlough

Gen. Tilghman A. Howard was probably the greatest man Parke county has been able to claim. When he received the appointment to serve as minister to the Republic of Texas in 1844, there were many who claimed he was sent there in order to get him out of the lime-light because he was a too-likely potential candidate for the presidency of the United States. Be that as it may, his untimely death from yellow fever left his widow, Martha, with a family to rear in Rockville. There were two sons, Frank and young Tilghman. Both developed into fine young men and both enlisted and fought during the Civil War, tho in different companies.

On Sept. 1, 1862, Frank came home on furlough. He spent the day visiting with friends and discussing the war. After he went to bed that night he found his upstairs room too hot for comfort and decided to sleep on the wooden bench in the downstairs hall. The family dog, a setter named Tanner, was overjoyed by the return of one of his young masters and lay on the floor beside the bench. Frank fell asleep but was aroused by the dog, howling. He reached down to sooth the dog and felt him crouched and trembling, with hackles risen. This was strange enough to fully awaken Frank and he sat up and saw, standing in the moonlit open front door, his brother, Tilghman. His reaction was delight; Til, too, had come home on furlough! With a roar of joy he sprang up and ran to the door but there was no one there. After calling his brother's name a few times, he came back into the hall where Tanner still crouched in evident terror. Since the dog was devoted to both boys, he suddenly wondered why it had behaved as it had. His mother was awakened by the commotion and he told her of his strange hallucination and of the dog's remarkable behavior. Since Til was not there, they dismissed it as a weird trick of moonlight and shadow, but both were more dismayed than they admitted. Within a day or two official word was received that Capt. Tilghman A. Howard, aged 22, had been killed at Uniontown, Ky., on Sept. 1. Precognition is a relatively common phenomenon, often occurring as a dream. Frank Howard agreed that if he, only, had seen his brother's specter he might have been persuaded it was a dream, but Tanner was wide awake and so, indeed, was Frank.



"We were two sisters"

Ghosts and poltergeists are popularly presented as instruments of malign intent, tho the record consistently shows them to be, at worst, mischievous and, at best, tender and compassionate. When Mrs. Hiram Hadley, of Rockville, lost her younger sister her grief was inconsolable. She was a sensible woman and did her best to hide her anguish but it was constant. One evening, several months after her sister's death, she and her husband were sitting in their living room before the open fire. He was reading and she was trying to sew but grief overwhelmed her and she stopped sewing and sat silently weeping. Suddenly a feeling of peace assailed her like a physical force. Her tears ceased. She looked at her husband who continued placidly reading. On a chair between them she saw her sister sitting quietly, looking into the fire and smiling gently. The three of them sat thus, as a comfortable family group, for about a quarter of an hour before the vision of the sister departed. In describing the occurrence, Mrs. Hadley said it marked the end of her great sorrow. By some unspoken communication her sister had reconciled her to the loss. The Hadleys moved away from Indiana but the house still stands at 416 W. High street. Neither it nor the Howard home has ever been regarded as a "haunted" house.

"There are more things in Heaven and earth . . ."

Early in January, 1903, Susan King Humphries, mother of Mrs. W.N. Carlisle and Mrs. I.R. Strouse, was ill at the home of Mrs. Carlisle. The illness was not regarded as too serious but the daughters, who adored their dainty little "Ma", had arranged to maintain constant vigil. The night we are concerned with was very cold and clear. Mrs. Carlisle had retired to an upstairs bedroom and Mrs. Strouse was in attendance in the sickroom on the first floor. Mrs. Humphries was resting comfortably and the house was completely quiet when Mrs. Strouse was surprised to hear singing. The Carlises had a Negro handyman who tended the furnace and who had been coming to fire late at night because of the illness and the cold weather. Mrs. Strouse had never before heard the man sing, but supposed it was he and went back thru the house to speak to him. He was not there and then she became aware the singing was by more than one voice. She could not distinguish words and the tune was elusive and unfamiliar but the effect was of exalting sweetness. She thought it must be coming from the street — there had been a lot of carolling a short time before. She went to the parlor and looked up and down the empty street, then realized the sound was in the house, where there was no possible source for it. She stood transfixed for a moment, then entered the sickroom as the strains of music gradually died away. In the dimly lighted room she looked at her mother and saw at once that a sinister change had occurred. Mrs. Humphries died within a day or two.

Mrs. Strouse was a writer of considerable national note — was, in fact, described as the most widely read woman columnist of her day. She had other experiences of extra-sensory perception during her lifetime, but none more implicit — really explicit — than this.



The worlds strangest baptistery.

Hermits and Recluses

Reference is made elsewhere to more than one eccentric man or woman who has added interest to Parke county's story. The supply is almost inexhaustible but some were so entirely accentric that few residents were aware of their existence. Years ago there was an old man who lived in a huge hollow log on the bank of the Wabash somewhere north of Montezuma. His knowledge of the river and the woods was vast but he was so withdrawn from any semblance of society that hardly anyone knew his name, even then. Today he has disappeared as completely as the log he dwelt in. Then, there was the man who became so increasingly erratic that he, too found domesticity intolerable and dug himself into a sort of burrow where he lived for several years. This fellow eschewed ordinary clothing and dressed himself in market baskets which he shredded and then wove into what must have been a highly uncomfortable kind of singlet. Harmless? Yes. Startling, if he suddenly appeared at the roadside? Yes.

'Oh, bury me not . . .'

One, among this brotherhood of hermits, lived in Jackson township and he must have been preoccupied by a feeling of destiny because he devoted untold hours to preparing an open tomb which he planned for his final resting place. On the face of a low cliff, down in the Fallen Rock area, may still be seen the results of his work; a natural fissure in the rock has been widened and squared and a headrest carved into the solid sandstone. It is conjectured that he hoped to be able to install himself there before life left his body and so to lie thruout eternity in the place of his own choosing. When he made this tomb, the place was a wilderness without roads and, since the tomb is virtually invisible from above and below, he doubtless considered it a secret fortress. It is almost a pity that the poor fellow could not fulfill his dream but died in bed and was buried according to law in a place designated by someone other than himself.

The World's Strangest Baptistery

Stories about John Lusk, last private owner of the Turkey Run tract, really deserve a special chapter if space permitted. Since it doesn't, we will only include him in the category of recluses and mention that conspicuous among his peculiarities was a radical, and inexplicable, objection to the order of Freemasons. Among the men who enjoyed his confidence and nominal friendship, those who belonged to that lodge were careful to conceal the fact from him. It is told that Mr. Lusk sometimes enjoyed perching on top of the covered bridge at the Narrows of Sugar Creek, where his family home still stands. If sightseers came to the Narrows and he had reason to believe there was a Mason among them, he stood on the roof of the bridge and fulminated against the order, then climaxed the tirade by leaping off the bridge into the creek as a gesture of purification from the fancied contamination.

And All Things In Proportion

Then, there was George. George had once had a wife and family but George was not the ideal father or husband and the family eventually ran him off and he built a shack near the river where, like the man in the log, he came and went according to whim and was not burdened with tiresome responsibility.

His shack was on land owned by J.M. Johns who tolerantly allowed him squatter's rights. When Mr. Johns built a private clubhouse, called Saxon Riffle, he appointed George as casual custodian of the place. When groups of men went to Saxon Riffle for fishing trips, George served as chief cook and kibitzer for the nightly poker games. George had never had it so good.

One time the men returned from a day's fishing and found George profoundly asleep on a bench outside the clubhouse. They always hid their whisky but he had ferreted it out, as the empty quart bottle beside the bench testified. They cleaned their fish, cooked supper, played cards and went to bed — one of them kindly spreading a blanket over George. Next morning they made breakfast, fixed sandwiches and left for another day on the river, leaving George still slumbering. When they returned with their catch at sundown they found George in undisturbed peace on the bench. As they pumped water to clean the fish, the body under the blanket heaved and stirred and George arose, stretched and greeted them cheerfully.

"Did you have a good day?" he asked, between yawns. "I guess I must have dozed off for a minute. Ahh, that's what I like. First a little nip — and then a little nap."

Bloody Parke

A set of books could be written about murders committed in Parke county during its brief one hundred forty-six years. Many have gone unpunished. In one case there have been several claimants for the role of murderer, altho the claims were not pushed during the lifetime of the claimants; descendants sought that doubtful recognition and unquestionably acted in good faith according to vague rumors and hints. The case was the last killing of an Indian in the county. It occurred during the 1840s when few full-blooded Indians remained in Indiana. One old Indian, nicknamed Johnny Green because his own name was unpronounceable, remained in the county. He was considered harmless when sober, but, like most Indians, was unpredictable and mean when drunk. And he was drunk pretty often. He roamed the woods, stopping at settlers' homes uninvited and, naturally enough, most of the women were afraid of him. One evening he walked into the home of Coleman Puett, a few miles northwest of Rockville, where Mrs. Puett was alone with her children. He squatted by the fire and told frightful tales of atrocities against the pioneers in which he had taken active part as a young brave, hinting that he would enjoy nothing more than repeating a few of them. Mr. Puett came home during the recital and threw him out. Next day Mr. Puett and his eldest son, Elisha, trailed the old Indian as far as Sugar Creek. On the following day Mr. Puett went alone, located Johnny Green fishing from a rock below the mouth of Turkey Run and shot him. It was not long before several versions of the killing were told and at least two other men were described as having fired the fatal shot. Since killing an Indian was no less punishable by law than any other homicide, it may be reasonably deduced that all the confusion was deliberately created in order to throw dust in the eyes of the authorities. One of the more popular versions is that he was fishing from Goose Rock, in what is now Turkey Run State Park; that he was shot and that his body is still trapped under the rock. This yarn has had the salubrious effect of discouraging swimming around Goose Rock, because the current there is treacherous and the water deep.

The Bad Old Days

During the 1880s and '90s, when the county was in the height of its coal mining boom, a large number of laborers were brought in. In the southeastern section, around the Caseyville (Diamond) fields, they were middle-Europeans; hot-blooded and short-tempered. They were paid good wages for those times but there was no sort of recreation except the all-too-popular saloons, where drinking led to fighting and fighting was unrestrained. Hardly a week went by without a shooting or knifing.

During that time, there was a serious strike at the mines at Minshall. The owners brought in some 460 Negro laborers from Virginia. The natural resentment that followed caused so many riots that the

Minshall operators hired a special police force from Terre Haute but a few of the Negro workers engaged in brawls and were killed. It is of interest that the acknowledged boss among the Negroes was a woman. She was a huge Negress called Big Six and said to have weighed 600 pounds. Most of the time Big Six kept her people in hand by the proven method of being bigger and stronger than they were. One of the workers, Sugarfoot, was six and a half feet tall and a born fighter. Perhaps it is a tribute to Big Six that he had to go to Coxville to have his last fight. He was killed there. Lyford, too, was a "wide open" mining town typical of the "wild west" towns that followed the gold fever. A Saturday night, in the mining towns, that did not have at least one fracas was a rarity. Violence and homicide became so common that metropolitan newspapers in the state coined the nickname "Bloody Parke" when reporting the frequent affrays.

In earlier days it was surprisingly easy for a man to kill another and vanish into the setting sun before the authorities were notified and warrants sworn. The telegraph helped, altho there was an instance of a terrible battle occuring at Lena and a hasty request for the sheriff being wired to Rockville. The message was garbled and the sheriff departed posthaste for Numa.

The telephone helped even more, but a man could still kill another in cold blood and evade justice — especially if he had some cooperation. For example: On July 31, 1897, a man from Newport named James McLaughlin dropped into a saloon at Montezuma. He took a sudden and irrational dislike for William Robertson, a pleasant young man of 28, who had worked for King Brothers of Montezuma for twelve years and who was a general favorite. McLaughlin cursed him and called him by all the vile names he could think of — which were plenty — and failed to antagonize him. To everyone's horror, McLaughlin drew a revolver and shot three times, two of the shots striking Robertson, who died at once. When the saloon keeper grappled with him, he was threatened with the same fate and McLaughlin walked out the door and across the bridge to Hillsdale, where he hired a carriage to take him to Newport. He dismissed the carriage at a street corner, claiming he was going to "give himself up." Altho a reward was offered, McLaughlin was never seen again.

Thanks to the telephone, the sheriff had arrived at Montezuma shortly after the shooting and was able to trace the killer to Newport that same night and there the trail ended. It did not improve relations between Parke and Vermillion counties that the driver of the hired carriage was a constable.

In August of the same year a 16-year-old Greene township boy shot and killed a man suspected of being too friendly with his mother. Later that year there was a throat-cutting at Lyford and a shooting at a dance in Rockville. While the '90s may have been "gay" most of the time, there were other times when a better descriptive would have been "grim."

Violence was by no means confined to the mining population and altho such events were more common than today, it was possible for a homicide to become Big News. We had one, during the Bloody Parke days, that "had everything" and which kept all the surrounding counties in a state of excitement for almost four years. A few people still remember it.

The Murder of Clara Shanks

Grange Corner is located at a crossroads south of the Fountain county line. The road going north joins the county line road. The Frederick Shanks family lived in the first house east on the Fountain county side of the road; across the road, on the Parke county side, lived Dan Keller and his wife Nancy and Dan's sister, Maggie. The Shanks' well went dry early in the summer of 1895 and they carried their water from the Kellers'. On Saturday morning, July 6, Nancy Keller called on Mrs. Shanks and told her they could get water but not to send their 16-year-old daughter, Clara, to fetch it. Clara, she stated, had been flirting with Dan and she suspected intimacy and if the girl didn't stay away from him she would "split her head open with an axe."

Clara had always been a well behaved girl who gave her family no trouble. During their noon meal, Mrs. Shanks announced the accusation made by Nancy Keller. Clara burst into tears, there was a stormy scene and Clara rushed from the house. Since girls of sixteen frequently react this way, under less provocation, the family was not alarmed. Certainly, it did not occur to them they would never see her alive again.

Later in the day they started looking for her. Mrs. Shanks walked up the road. Nancy Keller and a neighbor were visiting at the roadside and Nancy said she had seen Clara "going up the road" early in the afternoon, but no other neighbors had seen the girl. Mr. Shanks and the three sons searched the woods till dark before giving up the idea she might have fallen and hurt herself seriously. Altho it was not like Clara to torment them, they thought she might be deliberately hiding. Early next morning the boys went up to the Falls of Wolfe Creek, three-quarters of a mile from their home. There was a waterfall into a large, beautiful pool at this place and in the pool they saw the body of their sister. Neighbors came and with a hastily cut forked stick the body was removed from the pool, along with a man's black sateen shirt. The shirt was left beside the pool and mysteriously disappeared during the morning. Clara's face was badly lacerated, the back of the head matted with blood and the throat bruised. It was later testified that spots of blood were found on a log along the path to the pool. One of the men removed the blood spots by cutting chips from the log. The spotted chips were carefully saved.

It was soon learned that a group of boys had spent the previous afternoon swimming and diving in the pool and they all agreed there could have been no body in the pool at that time.

The coroner of Fountain county was called and announced a verdict of suicide and the remains of Clara Shanks were buried in Zachmiller cemetery. Few coroners' verdicts have ever met with such general objection. Twelve days after the death, the body was exhumed and no less than seven doctors, representing both Fountain and Parke counties, performed an autopsy. They stated the condition of the body made the work difficult but nonetheless conclusive. The findings were published in detail and included skull, vertebrae and facial bone damage. She had not drowned; she had not been pregnant. There had been damage to the throat and larynx. The doctors fully agreed she had died of violence.

Other factors than Nancy Keller's accusation directed suspicion to the Kellers. Spots of blood (later proved to be human) were found on bed slats in the Keller home and on a pair of Dan's trousers, altho the trousers had been recently spotted with paint; certain rash questions Dan had asked, after the discovery of the body; the disappearance of the black sateen shirt; testimony of a witness who had seen three women in the Keller house early on the fatal day. Thus the theory grew that Clara had rushed from her home to the Kellers' and had been strangled and bludgeoned to death and her body hidden until night, when it was carried to the pool. The case, then, belonged to Parke county and six weeks after the death Daniel Keller, 28; his wife, Nancy, and his sister, Margaret (Maggie) were arrested and jailed at Rockville.

Wolfe Creek Falls suddenly became the most popular "curiosity seeker" spot in the midwest. Watermelon stands and other hucksters did a thriving business. The Kellers' front fence was whittled by souvenir hunters and the tree from which the famed forked stick had been cut was almost entirely removed for the same reason.

The case went to trial Jan. 27, 1896 in Vigo County Circuit Court with an impressive array of legal talent. The courtroom was jammed from the start. (From the spectators' standpoint, even the first day was memorable because one of the jurors was discovered to be thoroughly drunk and incapable.)

In reading the testimony, a disinterested person finds the defendants' case flimsy but the skillful cross-questioning of their lawyer, Mr. John Lamb of Terre Haute, rattled and undermined the witnesses. Parke county's talented and clever "Dunk" (Duncan Puett) more than met his match. The verdict was, "Not guilty."

To the people of Grange Corner, this was an unbelievable blow. So convinced were they of the guilt of the Kellers and so deep their sympathy for the bereaved family that most of them had contributed to a fund for the aid of the prosecution.

A few months later Miss Maggie Keller, with Dan and Nancy, brought suit for \$50,000 for false arrest and damage to their reputations, naming some 16 residents of the Grange Corner area as defendants. One of the defendants actually disposed of all his property

in anticipation of this action. Preparation of their case consumed much time. Maggie married a Mr. James LaHue the following January. (Mr. LaHue had been charged with a homicide during the time the Kellers were in jail, so perhaps this gave the couple a little more in common than most newlyweds.)

The damage suit was venued to Covington and on the day appointed for the case, in May, 1899, the defendants turned out ready for the fray. The plaintiffs straggled in and there was an unexpected delay; then attorneys for the plaintiffs announced that Maggie Keller LaHue had dropped the charges, claiming she now only wanted to live in peace and quiet.

Does this seem surprising, after more than three years of preparation? It was later revealed that the father of Clara Shanks had again authorized the opening of his daughter's grave. In November of 1898, three doctors had supervised the removal of Clara's skull with the battered occipital plainly visible. Was it the thought of having to see this grisly reminder of that July afternoon four years earlier, shown in the courtroom, that impelled the Kellers to forgive and forget? Was the grave again opened and the skull replaced in the coffin, or is poor Clara's body still headless?

On the very day the Kellers went to trial, another Indiana girl left her home to be murdered. She was headless when she was laid in her grave. That was Pearl Brian of Greencastle. It was a strange fate that two girls should be murdered with such notoriety, almost within six months and living less than forty miles apart.

It might be symbolic of their different stations in life that Clara Shanks walked, barefoot, across a county line to her death while Pearl Brian, fashionably dressed, boarded a train to Cincinnati to meet a shocking fate which involved three states. The murder of Pearl Brian was solved and her executioners punished. Was Clara's murder solved, but her executioners acquitted? Or did an unknown killer commit the crime and escape detection?

Our Streams, and Who Named Them

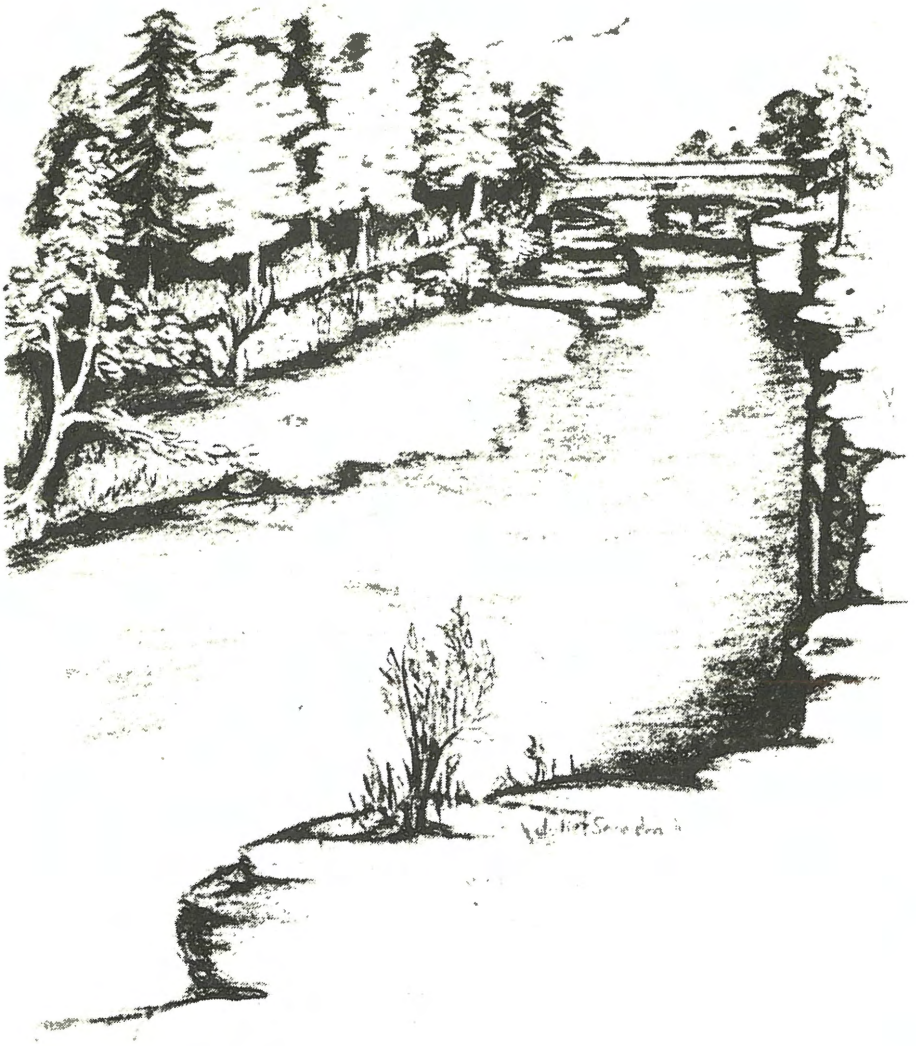
Parke county has so many streams, branches, brooks and creeks that it would be tiresome to enumerate them. As deforestation progressed, the water table dropped and many once-important streams have dwindled to mere trickles during the drier months. Confusion has been worsened by duplication of names. We have (Wabash) Mill Creek in Liberty township and (Sugar) Mill Creek in Sugar Creek township. Both are called Mill Creek; the distinguishing first names (never used) indicate into which larger stream each empties. We should probably be grateful for only two Mill Creeks — there may well be a hundred or so in the state and they all turned wheels for the mills that were the foundation of early economy.

Much more confusing are Big Raccoon and Little Raccoon creeks, both flowing mostly across the south half of the county. Little Raccoon has several forks, vaguely designated. One historian tells us the name is translated from Peshewa (itself a corruption of the Miami Pin-ji-wa) but since that word means wildcat, it seems unlikely. Another says the name was translated from the Miami word for raccoon, a-se-pa-na OR a-se-pa-na-si-pi-wi (Raccoon creek), but we don't know why the raccoon lent his name. Big Raccoon forms a U, rising on the east side of the county and emptying into the Wabash on the west. Little Raccoon flows erratically down the middle to its mouth on Big Raccoon, making a sort of trident of the U. When the land was first settled, the southeastern area was a swampy morass because Big Raccoon followed no regular channel. It was discovered that great colonies of beavers had built so many dams the stream had been deflected in countless places. The beavers were destroyed and the creek fell into a regular channel to continue the westward swing before starting its long flow north. (The north flow is highly unusual in this hemisphere. Some opinions attribute it to erosion from glacial moraine; others believe it to result from faults that long antedated our glacial periods.) Regardless of direction, it seems as tho the settlers should have named it Beaver creek.

Conflicting stories have also arisen about Sugar Creek. According to one historian, it derived from translation of the Miami Sa-na-min-dji-si-pi-wi or Sugar Tree Creek. Another says it was translated from the Pottawatomie Pun-go-se-co-ne, "water of many sugar trees." For a while some of the early settlers called it Rock River, the name given it by the French voyageurs, before agreeing to keep the Indian meaning.

No Matter How You Spell It, It's White River

The first explorers and fur traders were not noted for their high level of literacy, ability to write and spell being among the last requirements for survival in the wilderness. The "Longknives" and soldiers who fol-



Pun-go-se-co-ne

lowed were no better. By the time an Amerind word had been adopted by the French, later Anglicized and subjected to haphazard spelling thru the years, many mutations might occur. At least 15 spellings are to be found for the familiar word "Wabash." In its simplest original form, Wa-ba-si-pi, it means "white river." The name described the water at the river's source where it flows over a white limestone bed. We who live along this river are glad it kept the Indian name and the tributary received the translation.

Water Hazard

Some of our smaller streams have forgotten names. Groundhog, Sunderland, Cumberland and a dozen more are shown on old maps but few residents could locate them. As recently as 1965, however, we christened an unnamed branch of Williams creek. The branch runs across our golf course and was named in honor of the man who donated his valuable services as a golf course designer to the county in memory of his first wife, who had been a Parke county girl. Following a testimonial luncheon honoring Mr. William Diddel, the little stream was formally christened Bill Diddel Creek.

H2O VS. C2H5OH

Williams Creek itself was named in 1845 following a great temperance movement. Whiskey was a staple item carried in barreled stock by most early storekeepers. Nearly all merchants in Rockville sold whiskey during the 1820s and '30s but they yielded to pressure from the temperance faction and discontinued it — doubtless at considerable financial sacrifice. All the merchants yielded, that is, except Caleb Williams and as the others quit stocking the spirituous commodity, his trade must have increased. At last Caleb reluctantly agreed to sell no more whiskey. His decision was so happily received that the newly formed Parke Lodge No. 8, A. & F. M. recorded a resolution of congratulation. But the more lasting honor was the naming of Williams Creek for him. True, it has been shortened to Billy Creek and few people know the story but those who do should spare a kindly, if not sympathetic, thought to Caleb Williams who 'took the credit and let the cash go'.

"Rocks and Rills" — and runs

One of our streams is known the world around because of a song. A local traveller was amused, one night in Venice, to hear a gondolier warbling a familiar tune but pronouncing the key word, "Way-bash." We love the Wabash and are proud to hear its praises sung in any language, but it is not really our river. It belongs to all of Indiana and a part of Illinois.

Parke county has, however, a tiny stream that is almost as well known as the Wabash but which has its source and mouth within a

small sector of the county. Such short streams, when they have an abrupt fall, are called runs. One run that has achieved fame is Bull Run, in Virginia, near which two important battles were fought at the outset of the War Between The States. Ours is Turkey Run. There is a Turkey River in Iowa and another Turkey Run in Virginia but the beautiful State park named for our little run has attracted hundreds of thousands of visitors and will continue to do so as long as love of nature persists in people.

The run got its name during the winter of 1825, one of the earliest and coldest winters in Indiana history. The Wabash was frozen as far south as Vincennes by December 15. That winter the wolves worked as teams, driving deer out onto the frozen surface of Sugar Creek, where they were helpless and easily brought down. This created a shortage of game that added greatly to the pioneers' hardships.

The Garland family, whose clearing was in western Howard township, was luckier than some. They had been there longer and were better established. The Garlands had been the first family in Indiana to build a cabin north of the 10 O'Clock Line when the land was declared available in 1821. Capt. Garland had located the acreage he wanted while serving as an Army scout out of Vincennes in 1811, but had to wait ten years to secure his tract and move his family from Virginia.

On Dec. 23, 1825, Capt. Garland and his young son, Ned, went hunting, hoping to find game for their Christmas dinner. They crossed Sugar Creek and hunted two or three miles westward, along Sugar Mill Creek, without a shot. As the afternoon waned, Capt. Garland had to start home to do his evening chores but Ned begged permission to hunt a little longer. His father gave him the flintlock and advised him to go up Sugar Creek so he wouldn't get lost before heading for their clearing. Snow started falling as Ned walked up the icebound creek. As he neared a rocky gorge on the south bank, he saw a wild turkey fly into the gorge. Many more followed and he knew they were going to roost. It was new territory for the boy and he was surprised, when he entered the gorge, to see vast walls of sandstone rising on either side. He was also surprised, as he penetrated further, to find it much warmer than outside and knew this was why the turkeys roosted there. He came to a huge, fallen tree and lay down beside it, using it as a rest for the heavy rifle. He could hear the turkeys gobbling and fussing and hoped one would come within range because he was afraid of alarming them if he moved in closer; also it was getting dark in that gloomy fortress. Within a minute or two a handsome gobbler perched in range and began setting itself for the night. Ned drew careful aim and fired. The deafening reverberation of the shot in those rocky walls caused a tremendous flap among the birds who rose in confused panic. Ned wasn't even sure he had got his bird. He obeyed the first law of hunters of those days and reloaded the clumsy gun im-

mediately, measuring and pouring powder with a steady hand altho he was terribly excited. Then he ran to where his bird should have fallen, and there it was! The biggest gobbler he had ever seen. With the heavy bird on his back and the heavy gun in his hands he continued on up the gorge, reasoning it would have to come up to level ground not too far from their cabin. When the run forked, he kept to the left, lesser fork, stumbling under his load because it had gotten very dark. When he finally came out on level ground it was night and he was lost. Two inches of snow had fallen. He didn't know whether to turn right or left and the thought of the wolves that foraged at night was not comforting. As he stood trying to get his bearings, he heard a familiar sound — the bell worn by the Garland's cow, Bess, who was plodding thru the snow toward home. Bess's habit of straying afield had often annoyed Ned when he had to go out and look for her but tonight he greeted her fondly. She would not only lead him to the clearing but could carry the turkey on her back. They hadn't gone far before they met Capt. Garland, looking for Bess.

"Ned! You found her. One of these nights the wolves are going to get that cow. Did your mother send you out to look for her?"

"No, father. I haven't been home yet."

"You hunted this late? Did you get anything?"

"I reckon I got our Christmas dinner. It's on Bess's back."

"A turkey! What a beauty. Where did you get him, son?"

Ned described it and his father knew the place, tho he had never followed it thru and hadn't known it was a favorite turkey roost. Ned asked if it had a name.

"No. It's just one of the gulches around here. The run is short and never has needed a name."

"Father, since turkeys like to roost in there and I shot my first turkey there, do you suppose we could call it Turkey Run?"

"Why not? Turkey Run is as good a name as any."

So a boy, not yet in his teens, who personified the courage and ability of all those frontier boys who helped tame our wilderness, provided the name for the tract that has been kept as nearly like that wilderness as possible.

All Our Towns

With urbanization threatening to engulf the land, it seems strange that so many comfortable villages have fallen into desuetude and decay. "Open space" is considered a commodity by planners, who apportion it cautiously in proportion to estimated "need." Could the time come when our generous vistas of fields, ravines and woods will all be controlled by a slide rule and we might have to go several miles to see a hillside uncluttered by structures? Can you imagine Tick Ridge supporting a highrise apartment with aircraft mooring on top? Don't laugh. Could our great-grandfathers have imagined a six-hour crossing of the Atlantic in order to attend an automobile race? That race being, of all places, in INDIANA!

Our shabby little towns might be flattened and raised again in unrecognizable guise; under plastic domes with dwellings of amorphous, changeable shape. Surely, before long, someone will build houses that can be compressed, expanded or undulated at will. Rigid rooms may be doing something dire to our ids. Before such eventful time comes, let's take a kaleidoscopic look at our Parke county towns and communities, extant, moribund and extinct. Space does not permit particularizing, yet names alone may conjure up visions of the people who gave character to the places.

Annapolis	Once a bustling town with 8 or 10 manufacturing, hotel, stores, churches and a school. Name probably imitative.
Arabia	(extinct) A community in northern Wabash township; name given during the 1820's by Isaac Silliman. "Arab" was slang of the day for a petty thief and the neighborhood had a few residents who were not scrupulous about acquiring hogs.
Armiesburg	Originally Stringtown because series of cabins were connected by long logs. Present name given because armies of Gen. Harrison and Gen. Hopkins bivouacked nearby.
Bellmore	Originally North Hampton. Name changed at suggestion of Gen. Arthur Patterson to honor beautiful daughters of a resident named Moore; spelled Bellemore for a few years.
Bloomingtondale	Called Elevatus by Quaker settlers in 1823; changed to Bloomfield, then Bloomingtondale. Friends meeting established here. When Indianapolis Dayton & Springfield railroad came, New Town was formed, north of Old Town. Division still exists.

Bridgeton	Because of a distillery ("still house") operated about 1825, the place was called Sodom. A crude timber bridge, probably the first to be built in the county, gave the town its real name.
Byron	Small town in Howard township; reason for name not found.
Catlin	Named for landowner and resident; established when railroad (Evansville & Crawfordsville) went thru in (about) 1860.
Coloma	Originally Rocky Run; a Quaker settlement dating to 1821. Rocky Run Preparative Meeting granted in 1834, changed to Coloma Monthly Meeting in 1878. Name probably imitative.
Diamond	Also called Superior and Caseyville; coal miners' town established in the late '60s. Name doubtless suggested by coal.
East Rockville	(extinct) A small town with depot along Midland railroad.
Ferndale	Descriptive name for a community with one store.
Gallatin	(extinct) Shown on old maps near location of Rosedale. Evidently named for Albert Gallatin, member of Jefferson's cabinet and influential in early Territorial matters. (See Rosedale)
Goodin's Corner	Small village east of Fallen Rock in Jackson township. Named for resident.
Grange Corner	Originally Grangeburg. Named for National Grange.
Guion	Originally Bruin's Crossroads; named for early settler. Name changed by railroad.
Hollandsburg	First resident was John Collings; village named by him for popular Baptist minister from Kentucky.
Howard	A town on the Wabash & Erie Canal; named for Gen. Tilghman A. Howard. (See Westport)
Jessup	Originally Jessup's Station; located on E & C railroad and named for resident.
Judson	Originally Buchanan's Springs for James Buchanan who settled in 1821. Mr. Buchanan laid out the town on his own land, incorporated it and named it for Adoniran Judson, famed Presbyterian.
Klondyke	(extinct) A village that sprang up in 1898 when the Marion Brickworks opened nearby; named for the Gold Rush; nicknamed Smoky Row. (See also Smoky Row in Communities and Neigh-

	borhoods.)
Lena	Probably named by railroad; active during coal mining days.
Lodi	Towns named Gilderoy and Fullerton were laid out and abandoned here. (Legislation was passed against such exploits which were often fraudulent.) Lodi was undoubtedly named for the Italian city, famous for its fountain; Lodi's fountain is a mineral spring. At one time Maj. J.J. Safely bottled and sold Lodi Water. The name was changed for a few years to Waterman in honor of Dr. Waterman. The telegraph station was named Silverwood and some attempt was made to the change the town name again. Silverwood is now the name of a nearby village in Fountain county.
Lyford	Originally Clinton Locks, having canal locks located there. A large warehouse, used during canal days, was later bought by Hudnut & Co. of Terre Haute and the name changed to Hudnut; then it was called Hudnut-Lyford, honoring an executive of the railway.
Mansfield	Named New Dublin by first millers there (about 1823), Kelsey and Dickson. After Kelsey returned to his native Ireland, it became Dickson's Mills; then Strain's Mills before present name which probably imitated Mansfield, Ohio.
Marshall	Town formed around I D & S railroad; named for local man, Mahlon W. Marshall.
Mecca	Originally Maidstone; then, briefly, McCune's Mills. Name changed when storeowner Alexander McCune remarked, "Here come the pilgrims from Arabia to Mecca," one early spring day when winterbound residents of Arabia drove in procession into town for supplies. A theory the name was bestowed by Arabs is probably without foundation. Arabs were brought in to train Arabian horses bought by Mr. Alex Puett in the late '80s.
Milligan	Named for landowner.
Minshall	(extinct) Coal mining town named for D.W. Minshall, prominent coal operator. Post office inexplicably named Odd.
Montezuma	A very early camp site for Indians and whites because of nearby Wabash ford. No explanation for name ever offered. (Relative nearness of Ca-

	yuga suggests New York State influence.) Location of turning basin and large warehouse during Wabash & Erie Canal days created economic boom.
New Discovery	(extinct except for church) Named by early settlers who thought all desirable upland in county had been claimed but found land there.
Nowlingtown	(extinct) Named for resident.
Numa	A stagecoach stop, later a canal stop. Reason for name unknown.
Nyesville	Named for W.H. Nye who commenced extensive mining operations.
Parkeville	(extinct) Early village in Greene township; nicknamed Buncum.
Piattsville	(extinct) Called VanNesstown for a few years. Both VanNess and Piatt lived there.
Portland Mills	(extinct) Often called Portland, the name was imitative. Settled about 1824, the town had the distinction of being in two counties and four townships; razed when Mansfield Reservoir was built.
Rockville	Selected as site for county seat February, 1824; named for glacial boulder located in present courthouse yard. Original rock was much larger, Mr. Persius Harris having obtained permission from commissioners to remove portion of it to be included in foundation of his store building located on north side of square. Present courthouse (third) completed in 1882 at cost of (approx.) \$80,000.
Rockport	(extinct) Mill and flatboat yard located in and below rocky gorge suggested name. (Gorge also called Devil's Den.) Jackson covered bridge is still called Rockport bridge by many residents.
Rosedale	May have originally been Gallatin; Coal mines and the E & C railroad (circa 1860) gave town its start; named for Chauncey Rose.
Roseville	Oldest named community in the county. Named for Chauncey Rose who, with partners, established a mill in 1819. Now often called Coxville.
Smockville	Coal mining town in Raccoon township; named for resident.
Sylvania	Formerly a town with several businesses; name is descriptive.
Tangier	The town arose around the Attica & Southern railroad, built in mid '80s. Capt. J.T. Campbell, who named the town, said it was inspired

Westport	by current Moroccan troubles but he may have intended some subtlety inasmuch as Attica, Lodi and Mecca are scattered around Tangier. (extinct) A "subdivision" of Howard during canal days.
West Union	Being located at juncture of roads, Sugar Creek, feeder canal and railroad offers several reasons for name. A busy grain and livestock depot during rail days.
Yankeetown	(extinct) A "squatter" town (built with cabins strung — see Armiesburg) that flourished briefly in the 1820s near a large spring in Reserve township.

Communities And Neighborhoods

Many neighborhoods had — and some still have — their own names. Before Rural Free Delivery became effective, there were 35 postoffices in Parke county. The postoffice might be in a store and sometimes that was the extent of the "town," altho it served as a center for the surrounding area. Other communities had no postoffice but had a name and definite identity. A school or church might provide the name or, (as in Keep Out Corner in Liberty township), it might be a whimsical name. Names of some of those communities are: Fork of the Creeks in Florida township; Cincinatti (sic) on Roaring creek in Washington township; Smoky Row, near Tangier (and, later, Klondyke); Linn Thicket, in Greene; Popular (sic) Ridge and Rough and Ready, in Jackson; Whitehall, near East Rockville; Tick Ridge, northeast of Roseville; Farmers' Chapel, Union; Happy Hollow, Howard township; Bristle Ridge, Sugar Creek or Howard; Lusk Springs and Russell's Mills, Sugar Creek township; Dailey Chapel, Florida; Pleasant Valley, Raccoon; Lakeland, Penn. The last name is completely mysterious as Penn has no lakes.

The long hill north of New Discovery was formerly called Slaughter Hill because the grade is so steep that several oxen were killed from severe labor of building the road.

An island on the Wabash is named, on old maps, Looking Island. One county map shows it as Lookingville Island, but no explanation for the name has turned up.

For years before it became a state park, the Turkey Run tract was leased to individuals who operated it as a summer resort, in a small way. Railroad excursions were run for a while and it was advertised as Bloomingdale Glen. It was also called Garland Dells, briefly. That other nearby beauty spot, located in Parke and Montgomery counties, was named Shades of Death when it was first opened as a summer resort. The name being unwieldy, it was eventually shortened to The Shades. Other tracts of lesser grandeur are scattered over the county. There are two Devil's Dens (one in Penn and one in Liberty town-

ship), Becky Ridge (in Penn) and Fallen Rock (in Jackson). Coke Oven Hollow and Coke Oven Foundry (in Penn) are located on Sugar Creek where stone outcroppings form ledges. Flatboats were built on such a ledge at Coke Oven Hollow.

One of the most interesting of the forgotten names of Parke county is Blue Grass Landing, and the name is no mystery. When Harrison's army returned from the battle of Tippecanoe (1811), two brothers — Kentucky men — filled their pockets with seed from grass growing in a certain place along the route. It was grass of a kind unknown to any of the men. They took it back to their home and planted it with excellent return. After a year or two they had harvested enough to offer it for sale. It was called "Indiana Grass," then "Indiana Blue Grass." Later it was called, simply, "Blue Grass." Before the middle of the 19th century, an Indiana-man had extensive correspondence with Henry Clay regarding the origin of the grass and proved the point that the grass had, in fact, been found in Indiana. To carry the point a bit farther, it was found in what became Parke county and Blue Grass Landing was the place.

As often happens, the story was forgotten and the time came when no one seemed to know just where Blue Grass Landing had been. During the latter part of the 19th century the late Capt. J.T. Campbell, who was indefatigably interested in historical matters — besides being a surveyor and amateur geologist — made a project of locating Blue Grass Landing. From his study the place was located and is shown on the map included in this book.



Muttering angrily about the Chicago fire.

It's a Mad, Mad, Mad County Seat

No one can remember just when this happened. It has been several years and was during the days when the state was first torn between daylight saving and "Gods" time. (Leaving Greenwich out completely, as Indiana has always done.) It was long enough ago that no one but Santa Claus would have dreamed of wearing a beard, altho, to tell the truth, it is the sort of thing that could happen 'most any time in Rockville.

Two salesmen were marooned by a faulty car. They were not acquainted in Rockville and, after eating lunch, were standing on the north side of the square cursing the fate that cast them, even for an hour or two, in such a boring country town.

As they stood there, idly watching the passersby, they saw a patriarchal man with a long beard placidly carry a folding chair onto the courthouse lawn, seat himself and fall to writing in what seemed to be a voluminous manuscript. The lawn was plainly posted KEEP OFF THE GRASS.

As they speculated about this privileged character, a little old woman came hopping along, peering into store windows with a fey look. She smiled shyly as she passed them, then stopped and critically studied the sidewalk. To their considerable surprise, she backed up and took a flying leap over that stretch of cement. At that moment a sonorous voice from behind said, "Excuse me, please," and they realized they were standing in front of a stairway leading to regions above street level. They moved aside and a distinguished-looking man with dark eyes and moustache passed from the stair entrance and walked down the street. He was nattily dressed and wore a noticeably wide brimmed hat. He was also wearing a little green bird on his shoulder and neither had ever seen a parakeet. Before they could comment on this unusual sight, they observed an elderly woman strolling toward them. Her hands were clasped behind her back and she seemed to be musing aloud. In fact, they heard her mutter angrily about the Chicago Fire and she eyed them suspiciously. She was wearing a man's bathrobe and a stocking cap — altho it was a warm day.

"What time is it?" one asked the other. "Do you suppose the car is fixed?"

"I doubt it," said the other, consulting his watch. "It's only one o'clock."

At that moment the courthouse clock struck twelve.

"Come on!" said the first man. "Let's get out of this damned town before we go nuts, too!"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Grateful thanks for helpful details and suggested anecdotes are extended to the following Parke county people: Xenia Garrigus, Marcia Ott, Warren Buchanan, Pearl Virostko, Ethel Carson, Ruth Vaught, Sam Swope and Leighton Hunnicutt. Especial thanks go to Marie Collings for encouragement and suggestions, but most particular gratitude must go to all those people who said and did the things included here and may we always remember, "Only imbeciles want credit for the achievements of their ancestors."





